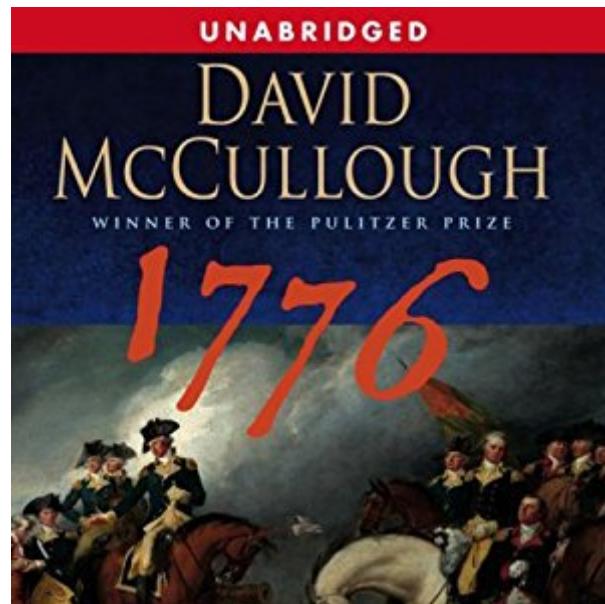


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**1776**



## Synopsis

In this stirring audiobook, David McCullough tells the intensely human story of those who marched with General George Washington in the year of the Declaration of Independence -- when the whole American cause was riding on their success, without which all hope for independence would have been dashed and the noble ideals of the Declaration would have amounted to little more than words on paper. Based on extensive research in both American and British archives, 1776 is the story of Americans in the ranks, men of every shape, size, and color, farmers, schoolteachers, shoemakers, no-accounts, and mere boys turned soldiers. And it is the story of the British commander, William Howe, and his highly disciplined redcoats who looked on their rebel foes with contempt and fought with a valor too little known. But it is the American commander-in-chief who stands foremost -- Washington, who had never before led an army in battle. The darkest hours of that tumultuous year were as dark as any Americans have known. Especially in our own tumultuous time, 1776 is a powerful testimony to how much is owed to a rare few in that brave founding epoch, and what a miracle it was that things turned out as they did. Written as a companion work to his celebrated biography of John Adams, David McCullough's 1776 is another landmark in the literature of American history. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

As a proud American who, I'm ashamed to admit, knew next to nothing about the details of the Revolutionary War, McCullough's "1776" was a much-needed history lesson for me. Written lucidly

and grippingly throughout, "1776" provides a strong foundation for one's study of this most critical period of our nation's history, and has inspired me to continue my own studies by reading as much as I can about the revolution and its meaning, both then and now. One also comes away with a sense of awe toward General (and later President) George Washington. The extensive bibliography that McCullough has provided is more than enough for a lifetime of study. I think that those Americans who read this book will, like me, feel more strongly patriotic and value more greatly the selflessness of those who fought for our country in its infancy. And I think that non-Americans who read it will better understand what it means to be an American, and hopefully see our country in a more favorable light. Yes, I realize that America has its problems, both currently and historically, and that we're certainly not beloved by everyone throughout the world, but it's nonetheless moving to at least try and perceive what we mean when we talk about the "American spirit": that feeling of unbounded liberty that allows us to truly pursue happiness. "1776" offers a path.

I am still reading it but it is an excellent book. It truly paints the picture of just what they were up against and how poorly equipped the rebels were. I highly recommend it to appreciate how hard fought our freedom was.

An excellent historic account using original information. McCullough does an amazing job telling the story of General Washington's struggles to build and hold together an ill-trained and ill-equipped Continental Army in the face of the most powerful army in the world at the time. This book brings to light the almost unimaginable plight of the men involved; the officers, soldiers, and politicians. The book also does an excellent job of describing the feelings of the British and Hessen soldiers and leaders, the Loyalists, and even the British politicians and king. What I would have liked to have seen in this book was more details about the actions in Canada and the South. Also lacking, and extremely important, was the heavy emphasis George Washington placed on Divine Providence and his unwavering faith in God. This is, more than anything, where George Washington found his strength and courage, and he was very outspoken about this fact.

With these haunting words of Thomas Paine, the author begins a chapter on the darkest moments of the Revolution, the freezing and shattered Continental Army falling back toward Philadelphia, the obvious next step in the British re conquest of its errant colonies. The reader is drawn in by the masterful story telling, almost suspending memory about the ultimate outcome to fully plumb the gravity of the impending failure. It is particularly startling when that rarest of authors has you hanging

on every turn of the page while reading about events whose outcome you already know. Mr McCullough is indeed one if these one-in-a-generation historians. In the US, we all read about George Washington, more a caricature than a flesh and bones man. What you don't get (and what McCullough so eloquently conveys), is that he and his rebels, far from being desperate men and women living deprived lives and driven to revolution out of few options, were instead people who were for the most part living very comfortable existences but nonetheless risked absolutely everything in this mad, quixotic venture. The acute awareness of this greater Cause pervaded the thoughts and writings of its leaders, and they thus fought a battle for the posterity of all humanity, not just themselves. It is refreshing in our jaded, post-religious age of the West to see people thoroughly convinced of their Providential role in improving Mankind's lot. It is also stunning to read how the entire venture might have turned on small events such as freak weather (fog in August shrouding all of Brooklyn as the bulk of the Continental Army retreated across the East River back to Manhattan in daylight but out of sight of the British--living in NY City, I've experienced this perhaps twice in half a century) or the inspiration for an unheard of winter attack across a frozen river against war-hardened professional Hessian mercenaries at Trenton, conceived of as the army was on the brink of collapse but an action which abruptly halted the perpetual retreat against overwhelmingly superior forces. You get a complex picture of Washington who, while expressing terrible misgivings to family back home, never, ever let on about such doubts to those around him. In spite of the back-stabbing amongst his subordinates (always at the worst possible moments), the utter absence of experienced soldiery and perpetual shortages of everything, Washington's cool, undaunting persistence drives others around him. His boldest moves were often conceived of at the darkest hours. He also comes across as a commander who actually learned from errors, sought advice regularly and deferred to it when the compelling argument was made. He seems indifferent to personal dangers; on horseback in the thick of battles, personally reconnoitering the front or with the rear of the column as the enemy is in hot pursuit). Not surprising then is the hagiography arising after his death and despite being possessed of a remote persona (? by design). I recommend it to anyone who needs reminding what exceptional people founded the US on the enduring principles of individual liberty, freedom of conscience, the redeeming virtue of personal merit and inviolability of constitutional rule of Law. And despite its founding flaws, America thus inspired much of humanity across three centuries.

My two dislikes about this book are that the Kindle version doesn't have battle maps ( maybe the print version doesn't have them either) and that the book doesn't take us through the entire

Revolutionary War. 1776 is well written, giving you war strategy and descriptions of people. As I read, I felt as if I were marching with our ragged army or making battle decisions with military leaders not knowing outcomes even though it's history and we do know the outcome!

This is one of the most powerful books that I have ever read. Every American should read this book in order to understand just how difficult it was to secure our independence. You will gain the greatest admiration for George Washington through this classic.

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